

CHIROPRACTIC

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Chiropractic is hugely popular. There are about 70,000 licensed practitioners in America alone, and several million people are treated annually.

Most patients who visit for the first time do so for lower back pain, neck pain, and headaches.

Chiropractic was developed in the late 19th century by Daniel D. Palmer (1845-1913), an occultist who attended spiritualist meetings. Chiropractic was an outgrowth of his “magnetic healing” or practice of hypnotism. The first chiropractic school was a part of Palmer’s magnetic healing infirmary.

At a coroner’s inquiry in 1905, Palmer refused to take the oath “so help me God,” protesting, “I don’t want any help from God” (“Osteopathy and Chiropractice,” Nov. 11, 2004, <http://quackfiles.blogspot.com/2004/11/osteopathy-and-chiropractic-little.html>).

A foundational doctrine of classic chiropractic is “vertebral subluxation.” This refers to “a myriad of signs and symptoms thought to occur as a result of a misaligned or dysfunctional spinal segment” (Wikipedia). It is *not* something that can be seen or measured, which is in contrast to the medical definition of spinal subluxation as “a gross misalignment of a joint that can be objectively measured.”

“The chiropractic vertebral subluxation complex has been a source of controversy and confusion since its inception in 1895 with critics both inside and outside the profession due to ITS METAPHYSICAL ORIGINS and claims of far reaching effects” (Wikipedia).

Palmer believed that the relief of subluxations was a cure for 95 percent all disease (*The Chiropractor's Adjuster*, 1910).

The following description of the practice of chiropractic that he gave in 1910 is pure quackery:

“The amount of nerve tension determines health or disease. In health there is normal tension, known as tone, the normal activity, strength and excitability of the various organs and functions as observed in a state of health. The kind of disease depends upon what nerves are too tense or too slack. Functions performed in a normal manner and amount result in health. Diseases are conditions resulting from either an excess or deficiency of functioning. The dualistic system -- spirit and body -- united by intellectual life -- the soul -- is the basis of this science of biology, and nerve tension is the basis of functional activity in health and disease. Spirit soul and body

compose the being, the source of mentality. Innate and Educated, two. mentalities, look after the welfare of the body physically and its surrounding environments. Chiropractors correct abnormalities of the intellect as well as those of the body.

“These discoveries and their development into a well-defined science are worth more to the student, practitioner and those desiring health, than all the therapeutical methods combined. I am the originator, the Fountain Head of the essential principle that disease is the result of too much or not enough functioning. I created the art of adjusting vertebrae, using the spinous and transverse processes as levers, and named the mental act of accumulating knowledge, the cumulative function, corresponding to the physical vegetative function -- growth of intellectual and physical -- together, with the science, art and philosophy -- Chiropractic” (Palmer, *The Chiropractor's Adjuster*, 1910).

Bartlett believed that he had received the theory of chiropractic from God. He wrote:

“I have received chiropractic from the other world, similar as did Mrs. Eddy [founder of the cult of Christian Science]. ... we must have a religious head, one who is the founder, as did Christ, Mohamed, Jo. Smith, Mrs. Eddy, Martin Luther and other who have founded religions. I am the fountain head. I am the founder of chiropractic in its science, in its art, in its philosophy and in its religious phase. Now, if chiropractors desire to claim me as their head, their leader, the way is clear. My writings have been gradually steering in that direction until now it is time to assume that we have the same right to as has Christian scientists. ... If you will watch my book closely as you read, you will find it has a religion contained in it, altho I do not so name it” (Letter from D.D. Bartlett to P.W. Johnson, May 4, 1911, http://www.chiro.org/Plus/History/Persons/PalmerDD/PalmerDD%27s_Religion-of-Chiro.pdf).

Daniel's son, Bartlett (1882-1961), who was also involved in the occult, was responsible for popularizing chiropractic and establishing it as an acceptable medical practice. He, too, believed that subluxations are the cause of most diseases (“Chiropractic,” *Citizendium*).

Bartlett was opposed to vaccination and rejected the germ doctrine of infectious disease, which is foundational to modern medicine and which has been so beneficial to mankind. This foolish attitude has continued to be held by a large percentage of chiropractors.

“When the polio epidemic was at its peak in the mid-1950s and the Salk vaccine was being promoted for immunization against poliomyelitis, the National Chiropractic Association campaigned against polio vaccination and recommended chiropractic adjustments for preventing and treating the disease. ... Leaning on the theory that correcting ‘vertebral subluxations’ will cure and prevent disease by removing ‘nerve interference’ and boosting the body's immune system, many chiropractors still oppose vaccination, fluoridation, and other mandatory public health measures. Despite the historical success of vaccination, neither of the two major chiropractic associations supports mandatory vaccination. ... Although fewer chiropractors

openly oppose vaccination today, the number who do is significant” (Samuel Homola, *How Chiropractic Subluxation Theory Threatens Public Health*, <http://www.chirobase.org/01General/risk.html>).

Bartlett, who rejected the teaching of the Bible, believed, with his father Daniel, that an intelligent natural healing energy called *Innate* flows through the body and is connected to the “Universal Intelligence” or “Great Spirit” that permeates the universe. This is based on the pagan doctrine of panentheism that God is in everything. Palmer’s *Innate* is comparable to the Taoist *chi*. He believed that *Innate* flows through the nervous system and can be blocked. Chiropractic, which means “done by hand,” manipulates or adjusts the spine to remove the blockages and enable the body to maintain its own healing ability. Palmer said, “We did not diagnose, treat, or cure disease. We analyzed, adjusted cause, and *Innate* in patient cured” (Joseph Keating, *Notes on B.J. Palmer and the Palmer School*).

Bartlett wrote:

“The fundamental cause of all disease lies between the *Innate* Intelligence and the body; in the interference to the normal and natural quantity efferent flow between *Innate* Intelligence and the body; in the interference to the normal and natural quantity afferent flow from body to *Innate* Intelligence. This interference between can make either sick” (Palmer, *The Science of Chiropractic its Principles and Philosophies*, vol. 22, 1949).

As we will see, chiropractic has branched into many occultic practices in recent decades. Chiropractors have given us Applied Kinesiology (George Goodheart), Iridology (Bernard Jensen), Neuro Emotional Technique (Scott Walker), Touch for Health (John Thie), and Behavioral Kinesiology (John Diamond).

The *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs* describes why it is such a short step from chiropractic to all sorts of occultic mysticism:

“It is important to understand the logical connection between chiropractic, the potential for dabbling in the psychic world, and muscle testing. Classic chiropractic theory easily lends itself to the acceptance of a psychic realm as related to health. ... That Goodheart might have used psychic means to develop his system of applied kinesiology would not be surprising. Furthermore, although elements of the chiropractic profession are scientifically oriented and practiced responsibly, chiropractic itself often rejects the safeguards of the scientific method; historically, it has opposed medical science and rejected any findings disproving its theories. Chiropractic, for example, was founded upon a false theory of subluxations being the cause of all disease, and its early concept of the ‘*Innate*’ is difficult to distinguish from psychic energy in general.”

There is no evidence for the theory of subluxations, and chiropractic diagnosis and remedy are infamously subjective and contradictory.

“One committee against health fraud sent a healthy four-year-old girl to five different chiropractors for a physical checkup. One claimed the child’s shoulder blades were ‘out of place’ and that she had ‘pinched nerves to her stomach and gallbladder.’ Another said that the child’s pelvis was ‘twisted.’ A third said that one hip was ‘elevated’ above the other and that spinal misalignments might cause her headaches, digestive problems, nervousness, and other disorders in the future. Another predicted that if her ‘shorter left leg’ were not treated she would have a problem in childbirth. The fifth found hip and neck problems and adjusted them without bothering to ask permission” (Ankerberg and Weldon, *Can You Trust Your Doctor*, p. 234).

For more examples of this see “Undercover Investigations of Chiropractors” by Stephen Barrett (<http://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/chiroinv.html>).

The problem of chiropractic dependency is great. I have personally known of many people who visit their chiropractor regularly for adjustments. Dr. Andrew Weil says:

“Chiropractors are quite successful in making patients dependent on them. I have never heard of a patient being told he or she has a normal spine on a first visit to one of these practitioners. There are always subluxations. Most patients are told they must come in for regular manipulation to make the adjustment ‘hold.’ The tendency of chiropractors [is] to seduce patients into long and costly therapy” (*Can You Trust Your Doctor*, p. 235).

There are various types of chiropractors today. The article on “Chiropractic” in the *Citizendium* divides them into four categories:

TRADITIONAL STRAIGHTS deal with subluxation and promote a broad scepticism toward childhood vaccination, pharmacology, and medical care.

OBJECTIVE STRAIGHTS also focus on correcting subluxations, but they encourage their patients to consult medical physicians when necessary.

MIXERS use more diverse diagnostic and treatment approaches, including naturopathic remedies and physical therapy devices.

REFORM chiropractors integrate their practice into contemporary medicine and do not subscribe to the Palmer philosophy or the subluxation theory.

Though the field of chiropractic is riddled with quackery and occultism, not all chiropractors are involved in these things. A minority merely use physical adjustments and massage to remedy neuromusculoskeletal ailments rather than dealing at an occultic “innate” or subluxation level, and they do not condemn modern medicine.

APPLIED KINESIOLOGY

Several popular “alternative medical” programs have been developed by chiropractors. One of these is Applied Kinesiology (AK), which is the practice of using muscle-strength testing to diagnose physical health. (It should not be confused with “kinesiology” or biomechanics, which is the scientific study of human movement.) It is based on the premise that every illness or physical deficiency is accompanied by a weakness in a corresponding muscle.

It was invented in 1964 by chiropractor George Goodheart (d. 2008) and is one of the most popular chiropractic techniques in the United States, with 43% of chiropractors employing it in 1998.

“Goodheart combined the occultic philosophy of early chiropractic theory concerning the body’s supposed *Innate* Intelligence with ancient Eastern practices designed to regulate supposed mystical life energies within the body. ... Applied kinesiology is thus a blending of the theory and/or practice of chiropractic and ancient Chinese Taoism. ... various occultic and spiritistic books ... employ [muscle testing] toward that end ... That applied kinesiology is used in occult practice is not surprising given the fact that Goodheart himself is a psychic” (John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Can You Trust Your Doctor?* p. 167).

Goodheart associated Applied Kinesiology with the flow of chi energy along the occultic meridians. The book *Infections: A Lifetime of Health for Your Child* suggests that the Applied Kinesiology practitioner can find the reason for infection by evaluating and correcting “the energy patterns within the body.”

The most common Applied Kinesiology test is the Delta, whereby the patient resists as the practitioner exerts downward force on the arm (“Applied Kinesiology,” Wikipedia). Other tests include assessing the patient’s gait and pressing “trigger points” to analyze supposed muscle weakness,

The “tests” are entirely subjective and their interpretation depends solely upon the particular practitioner. There are no absolute standards that can be applied.

The practice involves New Age hocus pocus and visualization. In “therapy localization,” for example, the practitioner places a hand over an area suspected to be in need of therapeutic attention and “the fingertip is hypothesized to focus the mind on the relevant area,” which allegedly results in a change in muscle response (Wikipedia). “The hand is thought to become a sort of psychic ‘conduit,’ able to locate the point of impaired function, allowing the practitioner to successfully ‘treat’ the symptom. Some practitioners claim that they use their hands to ‘sense’ various energy imbalances in different organs, much in the manner used by practitioners of psychic healing” (*Encyclopedia of New Age Belief*).

Applied Kinesiology is also used to test the emotional responses to situations by performing muscle testing while the patient visualizes various scenes (http://www.cancer.org/docroot/ETO/content/ETO_5_3X_Applied_Kinesiology.asp).

Nutritional deficiencies are detected by placing various items on the patient's tongue or placing the items in his hand or touching them to various parts of the body, and then testing for muscle strength. "If the muscle tests 'stronger,' the substance supposedly can remedy problems in the corresponding body parts. Testing is also used to indicate which nutrients are deficient. If a weak muscle becomes stronger after a nutrient (or a food high in the nutrient) is chewed, that supposedly indicates 'a deficiency normally associated with that muscle'" (Stephen Barrett, "Applied Kinesiology," <http://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/Tests/ak.html>).

Applied Kinesiology even claims to be able to detect problems before they arise, which leads to a regimen of preventive checkups. "In this case patients are encouraged to have a general diagnostic checkup, even when they feel fine. ... Proper treatment is then applied before the underlying 'problem' has a chance to manifest outward illness" (*Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*).

Once diagnosis is made, the prescription typically involves massage, chiropractic "adjustments," and often (often) overpriced vitamins, supplements, and homeopathic remedies.

Research has proven Applied Kinesiology to be bogus.

"A few researchers have investigated kinesiology muscle-testing procedures in controlled clinical studies. The results showed that applied kinesiology was not an accurate diagnostic tool, and that muscle response was not any more useful than random guessing. In fact, one study found that experienced kinesiologists made very different assessments regarding nutrient status for the same patients" (http://www.cancer.org/docroot/ETO/content/ETO_5_3X_Applied_Kinesiology.asp).

BEHAVIORAL KINESIOLOGY

Behavioral Kinesiology, which was developed by a chiropractor named John Diamond, takes Applied Kinesiology to its highest occultic level.

Diamond says that "Life Energy" is the "source of our physical and mental well-being" and is the same as the Chinese *chi*. The thymus gland, which is a lymphoid gland located beneath the breastbone at heart level, is said to be the "seat of the Life Energy" and "monitors and regulates energy flow in the meridian system."

According to BK, muscle testing can be used for basically anything in one's life, testing what type of music to listen to, what color to paint one's house, what foods to eat, and which vitamins to take.

BK claims that life energy is depleted by things such as shaking one's head, frowning, looking at a depiction of a cross, synthetic or refined foods, sunglasses, the musical note C, hats, cold showers, microwaves, perfume, even artificial light. "According to BK ... most things in our modern technological world are conspiring against us, depleting our 'life energy'" (*Encyclopedia of New Age Belief*). Further, people with depleted energy can deplete others by being in their presence or even by appearing on television!

If BK is true, it would mean that the individual should spend much of his life testing things in order to be sure that his life energy is in proper order and scrupulously avoiding any and all things that might be destructive to his energy field. I wonder how many people have become paranoid psychotics through such a philosophy!

IRIDOLOGY

Iridology is the practice of examining the iris of the eye to diagnose an individual's state of health, both psychological and physical. Similar to reflexology, iridology claims that each part of iris represents a corresponding area in the body. It was developed by chiropractor Bernard Jensen.

Iridologists commonly diagnose "imbalances" which they treat with vitamins, minerals, and herbal supplements ("Iridology: What Can the Eyes Really Tell," http://your-doctor.com/patient_info/alternative_remedies/various_therapy/fraud_topics/bogus_tests_tx/iridology.html).

A scientific study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, September 28, 1979, involved three renowned iridologists who gave their best effort to provide accurate diagnoses. "All three failed miserably."

NEURO-EMOTIONAL TECHNIQUES

Neuro-Emotional Techniques (NET) was developed in the 1980s by Scott Walker, a chiropractor. It is adapted from Applied Kinesiology and is based on the same pagan principle that the body's occultic energy or chi must be kept in balance.

NET focuses on the emotions. It claims that negative emotions can create "locks" and imbalances in the nervous system called a Neuro-Emotional Complex (NEC). The NEC can also, allegedly, manifest as a spinal subluxation or an imbalance in an acupuncture meridian. This, in turn, causes ill health.

NET claims that the locks and imbalances can be tested through muscle testing, body reflex points, and semantic reactions.

The patient is instructed to think of an issue that is upsetting and is then tested.

The diagnosis and prescription are purely subjective, of course.

NET is said to be able to diagnose problems and feelings, access the subconscious, discover early traumas, and act as a biofeedback loop, to teach people what they are feeling (http://healing.about.com/od/net/a/net_jgazley_2.htm).

TOUCH FOR HEALTH

Touch for Health was developed by chiropractor John Thie. It is a form of Applied Kinesiology, but it moves even more deeply into the realm of the psychic. Thie claims that the life energy can be regulated and manipulated by mental power alone. This is the New Age practice of visualization. "In fact, you do not even have to make contact with the body. You can simply follow the meridians in your mind's eye, through concentration, and produce much the same effect" (*Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*).

Thie believes that "we are all one with the universe" ("Touch for Health: An Interview with John Thie," *Science of Mind*, Sept.1977).

CONCLUDING WARNING

We are forbidden to adopt the ways of the heathen (Jeremiah 10:2). Things associated with idolatry and pagan darkness are demonic, and the Bible forbids us to participate with such things (1 Corinthians 10:19-21). The Word of God warns, "*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*" (Ephesians 5:11).

If a practice is questionable, it should be avoided. "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23).

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